

Remarks

Claims 1, 5, 9 and 46 have been amended. Claims 6 and 7 have been canceled.

The Examiner has rejected applicant's claims 6, 7 and 9 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim applicant's invention. The Examiner states that in claim 6, the prepositional phrases separated by commas make the claim unclear. As to claim 7, the Examiner further states that the limitation "said node increases" in line 4 lacks an antecedent basis.

Applicant points out that claims 6 and 7 have been canceled. However, the limitations of these claims have been added to amended claim 1. In order to avoid the rejection raised with respect to canceled claim 6 being applied to amended claim 1, the feature in claim 1 paralleling canceled claim 6 has been amended to delete the commas so as to clarify this feature. Similarly, the canceled claim 7 feature added to claim 1 has been amended to change the recitation "said node increases" to--a node increases--.

Amended claim 1 is thus believed to particularly point out and distinctly claim applicant's invention in compliance with the provisions of 35 USC § 112, second paragraph.

It is also noted, with respect to amended claim 1, that the step of calculation of entropy (added feature of canceled claim 6) of each node is supported by equation (1) on page 18 of applicant's specification. Additionally, the evaluation step of amended claim 1 (added feature of canceled claim 7) is supported by equations (2) and (3) on page 20 of applicant's specification.

Since claim 7 was rejected only on the basis of 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, and not on any other basis, amended claim 1, which incorporates the features of canceled claims 6 and 7 and additionally has overcome the § 112 rejection, is believed to patentably distinguish

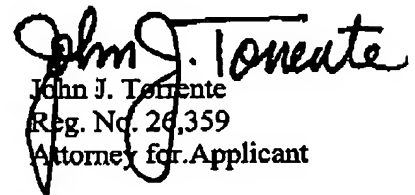
over the cited art of record. Likewise claim 46, which has been amended to parallel amended claim 1, is also believed to patentably distinguish over the cited art of record.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicant's claims 1 and 46, as amended, and their respective dependent claims, meet all statutory requirements. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims and passage of same and this application to issue is respectfully requested.

Dated: August 30, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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